

THE FAIRFAX AREA AGENCY ON AGING PRESENTS CAREGIVER'S CORNER ONLINE FEBRUARY 2006

"Caregiver's Corner Online" is an electronic newsletter produced by the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging (AAA) with funding from the National Family Caregiver Support Program of the Older Americans Act. Our goal is to send you information to support you as a family caregiver for an older adult.

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1. MARCH IS NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH. This is an excellent time to dust off those forgotten New Year's resolutions for healthy eating. Bite by bite, you can begin eating healthier and making healthier choices at mealtime. The theme for National Nutrition month is "Step Up to Nutrition & Health," challenging YOU to improve your diet and take charge to feel healthier! Whether you are an older adult or a caregiver for one, food and activity choices make a difference in how you and your loved one function.

****Eating right and getting regular physical activity are keys to a healthy lifestyle.**

****Make smart choices from every food group. Give your body the balanced nutrition it needs by eating a variety of nutrient-packed foods every day. Just be sure to stay within your daily calorie needs.**

****Get the most nutrition out of your calories. Choose the most nutritionally rich foods you can from each food group each day - those packed with vitamins, minerals, fiber and other nutrients but lower in calories. Fruits and vegetables are a good place to start to find low-calorie, highly nutritious foods.**

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****Find your balance between food and physical activity.** Regular physical activity is important for your overall health and fitness, plus it helps control body weight, promotes a feeling of well-being and reduces the risk of chronic diseases.

****Play it safe with foods.** Prepare, handle, and store food properly to keep you and your family safe.

More information about the Dietary Guidelines and MyPyramid is available online at www.healthierus.gov/dietaryguidelines and www.mypyramid.gov.

2. NUTRITION CLASS OFFERED THROUGH INOVA HEALTH SOURCE. "Dealing with Dairy: The Low-Down on Lactose Intolerance" – Learn what foods to avoid if you have lactose intolerance, how to meet your individual calcium needs, and what dairy foods you may still be able to enjoy. Presented by a Registered Dietician on March 8, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. at Alexandria Hospital (60 minute session, \$20.). Please call to register: 703-204-3366, TTY: 703-204-3329 or visit the Web site at www.inova.com/inovapublic.srt/healthinfo/Winter2006.pdf.

3. SENIORNAVIGATOR ONLINE RESOURCE: SENIORNAVIGATOR HELPS NAVIGATE THE AGING AND CAREGIVING JOURNEY. When providing care for elderly family members and loved ones, caregivers need information that is easy to find. Accessing resources may be easier than you think when you use SeniorNavigator, a free Internet service that connects seniors and caregivers with the local services they need. The SeniorNavigator Web site, www.seniornavigator.org, features nearly 19,000 programs and services throughout Virginia, searchable by zip code, city or county. Additionally, there are hundreds of articles that address health and aging issues, financial concerns, legal questions, housing and assisted living facilities, caregiver challenges, and more. Two thousand links connect to other aging support Web sites. More than just an online telephone book listing, the site provides information about service providers, such as hours of operation, methods of payment, languages spoken, available transportation, eligibility requirements and more.

Often seniors and caregivers have needs, but don't know what types of services are available. The new "Needs Assessment" tool asks 12 simple questions, and uses the answers to search for a tailored list of services to support one's unique needs. The "Needs Assessment" tool helps identify resources available for seniors and caregivers in Fairfax County and throughout Virginia. All information provided when registering or taking the "Needs Assessment" is kept absolutely confidential and will not be shared with a third party at any time.

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For those who do not have Internet access, there are currently 40 SeniorNavigator Centers in community settings throughout Fairfax County. The centers are located in hospitals, libraries, senior centers, community centers, and other organizations that have volunteered to serve as SeniorNavigator Centers. These sites make it possible for all Virginians to locate free health and aging information regardless of income or locality. The community-based centers have trained staff who can assist seniors and caregivers in obtaining information about support services using the SeniorNavigator Web site.

SeniorNavigator is a non-profit organization designed to provide vital support to those struggling to find help with elder care in Virginia. For more information about local services or to find the SeniorNavigator Center nearest you, visit www.seniornavigator.org or call toll-free 1-866-393-0957; TTY 711.

(This article was prepared by Michelle Monk, SeniorNavigator Community Consultant for the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging.)

4. FREE SEMINARS FOR CAREGIVERS OF OLDER ADULTS. The Fairfax Caregiver Seminar Consortium has announced its Spring 2006 series of presentations for caregivers of older adults. These free Seminars will be presented by experts at various times and places in Fairfax County. Registration is not required but strongly encouraged. Please call 703-324-5205, TTY 703-449-1186, to register or to request reasonable ADA accommodations.

Seminars for Caregivers of Older Adults Spring 2006 Schedule:

Seminar #1: "Transitions - When More Help is Needed" on Tuesday, April 4, 2006, 7:00-8:30 p.m. at Lewinsville Adult Day Health Care Center.

Seminar #2: "Understanding Dementia - Communication and Behavior" on Friday, April 7, 2006, 10:00-11:30 a.m. at Alzheimer's Family Day Center.

Seminar #3: "Financial Management 101" on Tuesday, April 11, 2006, 7:00-8:30 p.m. at Centreville Regional Library.

Seminar #4: "Home is No Longer an Option - Now What?" on Tuesday, April 18, 2006, 1:00-2:30 p.m. at Herndon Senior Center.

Seminar #5: "Long Distance Caregiving" on Wednesday, April 19, 2006 7:00-8:30 p.m. at George Mason Regional Library.

Seminar #6: "Navigating the Legal and Medicaid Maze of Long Term Care" on Wednesday, April 26, 2006, 7:00-8:30 p.m. at Lincolnia Adult Day Health Care Center.

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Seminar #7: "End of Life Decisions" on Tuesday, May 2, 2006, 7:00-8:30 p.m. at the Pennino Building.

Seminar #8: "Understanding Insurance and Medicare" on Friday, May 5, 2006, 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Fairfax County Government Center.

Seminar #9: "Protecting Your Loved One: Consumer Protection, Financial Abuse, Fraud" on Thursday, May 11, 2006, 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. at the Sully District Building.

Seminar #10: "Geriatric Mental Health/Medications and Alcohol Use" on Thursday May 11, 2006, 7:00-8:30 p.m., at Groveton Senior Center.

Seminar #11: "Legal and Financial Aspects of Long Term Care" on Tuesday, May 16, 2006, 7:00-8:30 p.m. at Little River Glen Senior Center.

Seminar #12: "Humor for the Caregiver's Soul" on Tuesday, May 23, 2006, 7:00-8:30 p.m. at Lincolnia Senior Center.

The Consortium includes the Alzheimer's Association, Alzheimer's Family Day Center, Thomas West Financial Services, and the Fairfax County Departments of: Family Services, Community and Recreation Services, Public Library, and Health.

5. DO YOU HAVE A CAREGIVER EXPERIENCE OR INSIGHT TO SHARE?

Let us hear from you – Please e-mail us at fairfax_aaa@fairfaxcounty.gov.

6. PREVIOUS EDITIONS OF "CAREGIVER'S CORNER ONLINE" NEWSLETTER ARE NOW AVAILABLE. Current and past editions of the "Caregiver's Corner Online" newsletter are available online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/aaa/caregivers_corner_nl.htm.

Please note that these items are included for informational purposes only and do not imply endorsement by the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging or Fairfax County Government.

For further information, please contact an Aging Information Specialist at the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging (telephone: 703-324-7948; TTY 703-449-1186 or e-mail: fairfax_aaa@fairfaxcounty.gov). Visit our website at: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/aaa.
